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ROADS

1. Roads in Latvia were classified into three classes; first, second, and third. First class roads, which were maintained by the State, were 6 to 8 meters wide with two lanes, and consisted of the following types:
 - a) Automobile highways, 1571 kilometers, of which 183 km are in Kurzeme (Kurland Province). The highways were constructed of asphalt or concrete on a 25-centimeter deep foundation. The bridges had up to 15-ton carrying capacity and were built of reinforced concrete. All grades were leveled to 5 degrees and never exceeded 10 degrees.
 - b) Paved roads, 269 kilometers, of which 62 km are in Kurzeme (Kurland Province). The roads were paved with round cobblestones without a foundation. The bridges had a carrying capacity of 15 tons and were constructed of either wood, steel, or concrete. The paved road were usually located throughout small towns. The highways and paved roads were relatively straight.
 - c) Light (second-rate) highways, 964 kilometers, of which 246 km are in Kurzeme (Kurland Province). The lightly paved highways had a top layer of packed gravel or rubble and had no concrete or asphalt. The light foundation was only 10 to 15 centimeters in depth. The carrying capacity was up to 10 tons. The bridges also had a carrying capacity up to 10 tons and were constructed of wood.
 - d) Gravel roads, 8,679 kilometers, of which 1,829 km are in Kurzeme (Kurland Province). The gravel roads seldom exceeded the width of 6 meters and contained many sharp curves. The bridges had a carrying capacity of 5 to 10 tons and were constructed of wood. In dry weather the road were very dusty and after a long rainy period, very muddy.

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2. Second-class roads were maintained by local communities and were constructed of gravel. Gravel roads, 6,556 kilometers, of which 832 km are in Kurzeme (Kurland Province), were 5 to 6 meters wide with drainage ditches on both sides. These roads were graded less frequently and the gravel layer was less heavy than on first-class gravel roads.
3. Third-class roads, 17,621 kilometers, of which 3,490 km are in Kurzeme (Kurland Province) were maintained by local communities and were constructed for local needs. The roads were 4 meters wide and were wide enough for one motor vehicle or two-horse-drawn vehicles. The third-class road had a light gravel cover with steep grades in many places and made automotive travel impossible during the fall.
4. Lengths of roads between cities:
- | | |
|------------|-------------------------------------|
| Riga | - Yelgava, 41.5 km. |
| Riga | - Liepaja, 230 km. |
| Riga | - Ventspils, 200 km. |
| Riga | - Daugavpils, 233 km. |
| Riga | - Bauska, 67 km. |
| Riga | - Ape (Estonian border) 200 km. |
| Riga | - Ainazhi (Estonian border) 128 km. |
| Riga | - Krustpils, 142 km. |
| Krustpils | - Zilupe, 168 km. |
| Daugavpils | - Abrene, 164 km. |
| Liepaja | - Lithuanian border, 56 km. |
| Liepaja | - Kuldiga, 90 km. |
| Kuldiga | - Ventspils, 60 km. |

Railroads

5. As of 1 January 1940, there were four widths of railroad gauges in Latvia:
- Soviet gauge 1,524 mm; total length 2,048 km.
 - Standard (German) gauge 1,435 mm; total length 306 km.
 - Narrow gauge (branch lines) 750 mm; total length 561 km.
 - Narrow gauge (rural railroads) 600 mm; total length 549 km.

It is rumored that the standard gauge railroads were converted to Soviet gauge after World War II, and part of the 600 mm gauges were converted to 750 mm. The most complicated was the Liepaja railroad junction where all four gauges came together. After conversion the 1,524 mm and 750 mm remained.

6. The traffic capacity on the 1,524 mm gauge railroads was 6 to 10 trains daily in each direction. If necessary the main lines could increase their traffic capacity by adding 15 to 20 trains at the expense of the branch lines. The regular passenger trains had 6 to 10 cars and one engine. Freight trains had 30 to 40 17-ton freight cars and one engine.
7. All railroads in Latvia were built on a gravel roadbed with wooden ties and usually with 20-meter rail sections. Passenger trains travelled at a speed of approximately 60 kilometers per hour. Freight trains travelled at a speed of approximately 40 kilometers per hour. The maximum speed on Latvian tracks was 80 kilometers per hour.
8. All railroad bridges were of steel construction and were one way with the exception of the double-tracked Riga railroad bridge that crossed the Daugava River. Railroad station buildings were constructed of stone or brick. There were locomotive repair shops located in Riga, Yelgava, Liepaja, and Daugavpils.

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Airports

9. Prior to 1940 there was only one airport in Latvia which was suited for international air travel, i.e. Riga-Spilve. The field was two kilometers square, and had two 1,500 meter concrete runways, hangars, and airport buildings. Liepaja had a smaller city airport with a 1,000 meter long runway, a hangar, and a passenger building. The overall size of the Liepaja airport was 1 x 1.5 kilometers. I have heard that it is not in use at the present time. In 1940, the Soviets worked speedily to construct the Riga-Salaspils, Liepaja, Tsirava, Ezere, and Bauska airports. The size of these fields was approximately 2 x 2 kms. The runways were constructed of thick concrete plates, 1 x 1.5 meters, approximately 15 to 20 cm thick. Length of the runways was about 2 kms. The Soviets were unable to complete the construction of any of these airports before the German attack with the exception of the Liepaja airport. Construction on the airport began in 1939 and it was put into operation prior to June 1941. The Liepaja airport had two hangars that once housed bombers, eight barracks, railroad siding tracks, a water supply system, and a drainage system. During the German occupation no improvements were made on the airports at Riga-Salaspils, Tsirava, Bauska, and Ezere. They concentrated on building a new airport at Dundaga and used the Liepaja airport only for training purposes. According to recent information, the Soviets have completed construction at the Riga-Salaspils, Tsirava, Ezere, Bauska, and Dundaga airports and have rebuilt the airport at Tsisis. No information is available on the length of the runways or the types of airport buildings at the present time.

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10. Locations of airports:

Riga-Spilve airport 57 01 N, 24 02 E
 Riga-Salaspils airport 56 55 N, 24 15 E
 Liepaja airport, 56 32 N, 21 05 E
 Tsirava airport, 56 44 N, 21 16 E
 Ezere airport, 56 26 N, 22 16 E
 Bauska airport, 56 25 N, 24 15 E
 Dundaga airport, 57 32 N, 22 18 E
 Tsisis airport, 56 59 N, 25 21 E.

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